

**Town of Brentwood  
Budget Committee**  
Minutes of November 14, 2016

*Meeting:* Budget committee meeting held at the Brentwood Town Office

*Present:* Krista Steger, Chairperson, Keith Levitsky, Bill Faria, Malcolm Allison, Michelle Siudut, Melissa Hanlon, Jeff Bryan, Amy Mitchell

*Visitors:* Lisa Swazey, Kim Woods, Liz Faria

Krista called the meeting to order at 7:01.

**Correspondence**

Krista received a copy of a letter to the selectmen from Rebecca Foster of Prescott Road. She read the letter to the entire committee which made some requests and suggestions related to the Prescott Road reconstruction project. There was no Budcomm action requested or needed. There will be a walk around of the project at 730AM on Saturday November 19, for anyone who would like to participate. Meet at the water tower.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Krista called for approval of the draft minutes of the Budcomm meeting of October 17, 2016. There were three corrections and an amendment. Motion to approve the minutes Jeff/Keith carried 8-0.

**Updates from the Selectman & School Board Representatives**

Jeff reported that everything is going OK with the selectman's proposed department budgets. There will be increases to the Fire and Police budgets which will be handled at their next meeting. Amy reported that the School board had their first look at the budget and it is coming along nicely and would be presented to the Budcomm on December 19, 2016. Amy stated that the school board is working on minimizing possible increases due to retirement and health care, and expects a small increase.

**Budgets for Consideration**

Krista stated that the committee would take the department budgets in the order that the selectmen handled them, and provided copies of the selectman's minutes. She also provided a sheet from Karen which compared 2016 department budget numbers (not actuals) with the 2017 requests.

Cemetery Budget requested \$8247 an increase of \$697 primarily due to increase in salary/hours. Discussion followed. Motion to approve Jeff/Amy carried 8-0.

Information Systems Budget requested \$31,533, down from last year's \$49,021 due to the equipment purchases expected to be in a warrant article to establish a Capital Reserve Fund for that purpose. Motion to approve Jeff/Melissa carried 8-0.

Health Officer Budget is level at \$1. Motion to approve Melissa/Keith carried 8-0.

General Government Budget requested at \$35,627, a decrease of \$1795. Malcolm noted that the long range planning line for \$2000 and miscellaneous contracts line for \$1000, neither of which has been used for the same amounts in the 2016 year. Discussion followed. Motion to amend the budget amount to \$33,627 Mal/Amy carried 7-1. Bill requested further information on exactly what the \$2000 for the long range planning line was for.

Insurance Budget requested at \$100,894 up \$2222 due to premium increases and calendar year transitions. Motion to approve Jeff/Michelle carried 8-0.

Krista read the note given by Karen to the committee regarding the town tax rate. The selectmen settled on \$24.25 per thousand valuation which reflects a \$0.94 reduction resulting from \$557,369 being used to reduce taxes.

Planning Board Budget requested \$107,653, up \$8478 due to an increase in Salaries and Circuit Rider/ Long range. Bill noted he has concerns about increases in salaries/retirement for this and all departments. Jeff noted that the cost of living went up 2.8% and that a 3% increase for the town employees is not out of line. He also noted that the town does not award COLAs, only merit raises. Discussion followed. Motion to approve Jeff/Keith failed 3-5. Keith suggested \$105,000. Additional discussion followed including rules, details, and the use of impact fees. Motion to table pending more detailed information regarding the amount and the nature of impact fees Amy/Michelle carried 6-2.

Conservation Budget requested \$18,643 a reduction of \$222. Discussion followed regarding replenishing the conservation fund. Motion to approve Jeff/Mal carried 8-0.

Mosquito Control Budget level at \$30,500. Motion to approve Jeff/Michelle carried 8-0.

Zoning Board Budget requested \$1,377 up \$637 due to increase in the number of applications/meetings. Krista noted that this is in and out as the expense is paid by the applicant. Motion to approve Jeff/Keith carried 8-0.

Town Administrator Budget requested at \$103,017 up \$6340 due to increase in salaries and training. Jeff noted that the administrator has been doing a good job and that the selectman agreed on a 5% increase. Discussion followed. Bill reminded everyone again that he is very concerned about town salaries going up along with the associated retirement and health cost increases. Motion to approve Jeff/Keith carried 8-0.

Krista noted that we previously tabled the Emergency Management budget request of \$14,875 which was level. Jeff reported that the money we questioned comes from Seabrook is again "in and out" and that we have to appropriate the funds. Motion to approve Jeff/Michelle carried 8-0.

Krista also noted that we previously tabled the Executive office budget request of \$27,489 pending the selectmen's decision on their possible salary increases. Jeff reported that the selectmen had decided not to request and increase. Motion to approve Jeff/Michelle carried 8-0.

### **Other Business**

Bill reiterated his concern about town employee salaries and increases which may be presented in future department budget requests. He will express those concerns when they are presented to the Budcomm.

Krista updated the members on the coop school district budget. The last bond payment will be made this year. The \$1M associated with that (while not a bond payment next year) will be eaten up by next year's increases in salary, retirement and whopping health care costs.

### **Visitor Comments**

Liz Faria: Impact fees, when first started, were originally were to be returned to the general fund, and would like to know when they first started. Bill commented that the NH law regarding impact fee usage has changed since the impact fee program started. Melissa noted that the impact fees are now spent on projects by the selectman which does reduce the tax rate, and is similar to the funds going back to the general fund. Discussion followed.

Liz pointed out that 150 hours of training for the administrator is equivalent to 19 days of training.

Liz asked about the \$22M building fund for the coop school district budget. Krista pointed out that this was not included in her coop school budget comments yet but it will, no doubt go in front of the voters when it will be decided. Bill stated and Krista agreed that that amount of money will be a special bond issue and will go before the voters. Liz stated that the amount of the building fund has grown from \$15M to \$22M and that certainly will be discussed in the deliberative session, so citizen attendance at the deliberative session is extremely important

Next Budcomm meeting is November 21 at 7pm at the town office.

Motion to adjourn at 8:27 Jeff/Amy, carried 8-0

Minutes respectfully submitted by Malcolm Allison

